

VZCZCXRO1214
PP RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #1027 2001625
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 181625Z JUL 08
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8531
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1993
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1773
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 1196
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1557

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 001027

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: PM-DESIGNATE PIERRE-LOUIS CONFIRMED BY LOWER
CHAMBER, FACES TOUGH FIGHT IN SENATE

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 1019

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Donald L. Moore for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) The Chamber of Deputies on July 17 voted to confirm Michele Pierre-Louis as Prime Minister. In a brief afternoon session, the commission tasked with studying Pierre-Louis' qualifications presented its report, which concluded she was constitutionally eligible for the Prime Minister position. After a short discussion focusing on the conclusions of the report, sixty-one deputies voted in favor of Pierre-Louis. A single deputy voted against her, and 20 deputies abstained. The result came about after the majority bloc in the Chamber, the Cooperative of Progressive Parliamentarians (CPP), met with her that same morning and then voted in an internal caucus 29-9 to support her. The CPP maintained discipline and voted as a bloc in her favor in the official Chamber vote. Along with support from most members of one of the minority blocs, the Union of Parliamentarians for National Development (UPDN), Pierre-Louis had more than enough votes for the required majority support of members present.

12. (SBU) The only deputy to vote against Pierre-Louis, Edouard Laurere (Union, Petite-Riviere/Nippes), said he could not support Pierre-Louis unless she formally denied accusations of homosexuality, stating on the floor of the Chamber that a Prime Minister should be ''above suspicion'' and a ''moral leader'' of the country. He thundered that to confirm her as PM without clarifying the sexual orientation issue would be to condone the principles of ''Sodom and Gomorrah.'' In accordance with their party leadership's instructions, the OPL and Fusion blocs abstained. Representatives of OPL and Fusion leadership told Poloff they asked their deputies to abstain in response to what they termed Preval's decision to exclude political parties from Pierre-Louis' cabinet.

13. (C) Both Pierre-Louis and Preval told the Ambassador this week that the political parties failed to grasp the subtly of the President's position in his recent discussions with them, where he had not/not categorically decided to exclude political parties from the cabinet. Preval told the Ambassador July 17 that he was willing to work with political parties, along with other actors interested in playing a positive role in the country's governance, to form a ''national consensus'' government (septel).

14. (SBU) The ball now passes to the court of the Haitian Senate. To be confirmed, Pierre-Louis needs the support of ten of the Senate's 18 members. The Senate has formed a commission to study her citizenship and other documents and determine her constitutional eligibility. They will likely present their findings the week of July 21. Pierre-Louis' backing in the Senate is flimsy, with five Senators already publicly declaring their opposition on the basis of her weak 'moral fiber,' a jab at her alleged homosexuality. If confirmed by the Senate, Pierre-Louis officially becomes head of government, and must then assemble a cabinet and present it and her general political platform to both chambers for a vote of confidence. Wrangling over cabinet posts and government priorities has already begun, although Pierre-Louis and President Preval have refused to enter into detailed discussions on these matters until after the initial confirmation process is complete.

MOORE